

REMARKS

Please cancel claims 17-21 and add new claims 22-35. Claims 22-35 are pending.

Claims 17-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Amend (US 2,070,770). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

New claim 22 is directed to preferred esters with nonyl residues (see, e.g., specification Example 2). The advantageous properties of the claimed esters with nonyl residues are supported by the comparative examples which are included in the Declaration under 37 CFR 1.132 filed herewith. These comparative examples show that the branched isononyl and isodecyl esters, especially the isononyl esters, have advantageous properties in comparison to the known 2-ethyl-hexyl esters which are mentioned in the prior art, e.g. US 3,308,086.

As shown by the comparative examples, branched products have improved properties in comparison to linear alkyl residues. Additionally, the comparative examples show that amongst branched products, the isononyl and isodecyl esters have especially good properties. A person having ordinary skill in the art would have known that isoesters are mixtures of isomeric esters with a varying degree of branching. It is this degree of branching and the mixture which leads to improved properties as a plasticizer in comparison to linear products.

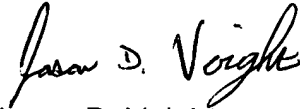
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Respectfully submitted,

KEIL & WEINKAUF

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jason D. Voight". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "V" and "O".

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